

College of Marin Academic Senate
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The College of Marin Academic Senate and the College of Marin administrative leadership agree that the following statements reflect a mutual understanding of an assessment philosophy and related activities at the college.

I. Why assess student learning outcomes?

The purpose of student learning assessment is to document and improve the college's programs. When we assess our students' learning, we are able to identify which of our teaching practices have been successful and which have not, thus enabling us to modify our teaching practices in order to increase success. When we identify student learning outcomes for our courses and share them with our students, we encourage students to become more actively involved in their own learning.

II. What is assessment?

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance. Assessment helps us create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education. (AAHE Bulletin 1995)

Assessment is an ongoing process, which ideally permeates the institution. The assessment loop involves both gathering information and using that information to modify and improve teaching and student learning. Outcomes assessment is not for the purpose of evaluating an individual student or a faculty member's performance. Therefore, assessment information will be reported in collective form.

III. Who will conduct outcomes assessment?

It is within the purview of the faculty of College of Marin to identify the core knowledge and skills that our students need to master, in keeping with the college's goals, and to shape, design, and disseminate institutional assessment, as instructed by the Academic Senate.

IV. Who will develop the processes of assessment?

It is within the purview of the faculty of College of Marin to develop the criteria by which student progress may be evaluated. These ongoing processes are open to modification and improvement. Not all assessment need be done in individual classes, and not every faculty member need assess all of the core learning. Faculty shall maintain ownership of student learning outcomes and assessment processes.

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